

Guildford Monthly Meeting, No. 21.

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FUND

May 15, 1935
A Seasonable

EPISTLE

To Believing

PARENTS, and their CHILDREN.

By *John Hands.*

Dear Friends, Brethren and Sisters,

MY Heart and Spirit in the pure Fellowship of the Holy Truth, which is our Sanctuary, and Holy Habitation of Safety and Preservation for ever, doth very dearly Salute you all, with all the faithful Followers of the Lamb, in this Nation of *England*, or Elsewhere, to whom these Lines may come; above all things my Soul desires, that the God of all our Mercies and Blessings (which he is pleased to bestow upon us) may keep us all near in our Spirits unto himself, in his Covenant, and in the Secret of his Pavilion, where our Souls may find Heavenly Comfort, and rest for ever; that so we may abide Heirs of that Inheritance and Lot which all the Holy People of God in all Ages rejoiced in, which was, and is above all that this fading and transitory World can afford unto us.

Dear Friends, my Soul greatly desires that we may all be strengthened with Might through the Spirit of the Lord in our inward Man, patiently and cheerfully to undergo and endure what the Lord is pleased to suffer to come upon us, for the Tryal of our Faith and Patience, which is more precious than Gold, which perisheth; that so according to that blessed Principle which we have received and make a Profession of, we may still walk humbly before the Lord, and

Guildford Meetings

1705

may more and more learn of him who is meek and low in Heart ; that so we may daily more and more find that pure and everlasting Rest to abound in our our Souls : And truly I may say, great is the Lord's Love and tender Bowels of Compassion towards his poor exercised Children, to make known unto them, in a large measure, that Rest and Peace which bears up their Heads over all these many Tryals and Afflictions, both from the Enemies within, and the Enemies without : And they may also see, that it has been very good, that the Lord has been pleased to afflict them, because his Rod and Staff hath been, and still is their Comfort : O that we may daily be found in the true Resignation to his blessed Will, that so we may truly know his Will to be done in our Earthen Vessels, as it is in Heaven ; then shall we know Christ more and more to be our Righteousness, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, so that he who was our *Alpha*, will be our *Omega* ; if we keep in Covenant with him, he will keep Covenant with us, and will never leave us nor forsake us, but will stand by us in the Sixth Trouble, and in the Seventh will not forsake us. O my very Soul is deeply bowed in a weighty Sense and Consideration of what the Lord has done for a little Remnant, in making known unto us, and revealing in us the Light of his Glorious Gospel, in his dear Son our alone ever blessed Saviour, who laid down his Life for all, that so we may no longer live unto our selves, but unto him that died for all, and rose again for the Justification of all that believe in him ; that so we may still run with Patience, the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of the Faith of his People, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the Shame ; and is late down at the Right Hand of God, and making Intercession for all Men, as our great and only Mediator. Now dear Friends, my Soul is truly Concerned, and deeply Exercised in the Sight and Sense which God hath given me of the dreadful terrible Day of the Lord's Pleading with all Flesh, which seems (in the Spirit) to be very near, where in he will plead with the Ungodly, the Wicked and Rebellious Generations of Men, with his *severe Judgments*, one after another, in order to bring People off of all Visible or fading Enjoyments ; that so all that have any Desire after the Lord, may come to set their Affections on him, who is Invisible, Immortal, and full of Glory : Certainly the Lord is drawing near in Judgment, as well as Mercy, to this Nation of *England*, and to the Nations and Islands afar off, to humble them

them unto Repentance. And Oh, that all that make Profession of the Blessed Truth of our God, did truly bow before him, unto whom his powerful Arm hath been made known, to redeem out of the Nature of Sin and Wickedness, into his Divine Nature; the Mercies of the Lord herein have been unexpressible unto these Friends, it hath for some Years pressed hard upon me to write a few Lines; by way of **Warning** *all in* the pure Love of God, to draw near in a holy Awe, and in a true Dread and Fear of the most high God, in bowing before him in Body, Soul and Spirit, that **so all** may find Mercy and help in the needful Time of Trouble: Oh, how doth the Lord stand at the Door of every Heart of the *Sons and Daughters* of Men, wooing and intreating by his good Spirit in them, to be reconciled unto him, for his dear Son, our only Saviour, Jesus Christ his Sake, who died for them, that they may come to know a Hiding-Place in the Time of Exercise, and deep Tryals, and sore Calamities that will fall heavy upon all the Disobedient that know not the Lord, nor will come to him, to be their sure and safe Hiding-Place? Oh, my Heart and Soul even mourns for such, whoever they are, under what Name or Denomination soever, that they may be truly awakened to Righteousness, that so they may come not only to say thy Will be done, but may be found truly and sensibly doing the same, that so a Sanctified State may be known both in Soul, Body and Spirit, which are the Lord's; so then here will be a Heavenly Translation out of the Kingdom of Satan, into the Kingdom of the dear Son of God. Now dear Friends, *all that are found Worshipers in the Outward Court only, and will remain there, will be made Desolate,* therefore in the Name of the Lord I beg it of you every one, in all Places where these Lines may come, seek the Lord whilst he may be found, call upon him whilst he is near unto you, in visiting of you by his good Spirit in you, and by his Servants and Messengers sent unto you, that so you may forsake the Evil of your Ways, and turn unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy, and to our God, for then he will abundantly pardon; for your Ways are not as the Lord's Ways (nor your Thoughts as his Thoughts) who follow the Inclinations of your own Hearts; for as high as the Heavens are above the Earth, so are his Ways above the Ways of such, and his Thoughts above the Thoughts of such. Therefore in great Love, and in the Yearnings of tender Bowels, I do warn and intreat you all who are unfaithful to the Lord, in not obeying the Voice of his good Spirit in your selves (nor in his Servants sent unto you, rising up early,

and lying down late, that they may be clear of the Blood of all Men) that you do prize the Day of your Visitation, whilst the Lord is striving with you, and whilst the Door of Mercy is open unto you, that so an Entrance into the Kingdom of his dear Son may be known unto you before it be too late, for the Lord's Spirit will not always strive with Man; therefore whilst the Day of God's Love and Visitation lasts, strive in the Ability God hath given you to enter in; for when once the Master of the House is risen up, and shut to the Door, then it will be too late; then many shall strive to enter in and shall not be able; for the time hastens wherein it will be said to him that is Filthy, be Filthy still, and to him that is Righteous, be Righteous still; for not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter, but he or they that doth his Will shall enter into his Kingdom; for behold the Lord is coming to try the Foundations of Men, and the Sandy Foundation with the Builder and Building thereon shall certainly fall; therefore all had need to see to their Standing, and upon what Foundation they are built: Oh that I might prevail with some Souls to come to know by a true Retirement to the Gift or Grace of God in them, a Building upon him who is the Rock of Ages, Christ Jesus, the sure Foundation of all the Righteous Generations; then whatever Storms or Tempests may come, this House and those that are built upon this Foundation will stand upon their Lot where God has set them, and they that abide on this Rock the Gates of Hell cannot prevail against them; such the Lord will favour with his blessed Presence, and make them to sing of his Goodness; here then he is known to be a Sanctuary, and a sure and safe Habitation; yea, Food never failing, and Water overflowing, as a Well of Water springing up unto Eternal Life. Oh! the Spirit and the Bride saith Come, and every one that will may come and take of the Water of Life freely: Oh! that every Soul that thirsteth would Come to this Living Water; for why should any be so unkind to their never-dying-Souls, as to deny themselves of Living Wine, Living Bread and Living Water, when they may have it without Money and without Price? Oh! why should any lay out their Money for that which is not Bread, and their Labour for that which doth not Satisfie; if People hearkned diligently unto the Lord, then they may come to eat that which is good, and hear and obey his Voice, then their Souls will live eternally: So, then these that so hear and believe in him, though they were Dead, yet shall they live; and they that live and believe in him shall

shall never die; then Blessed are they that truly experience the first Resurrection, for over such the second Death shall have no Power; these shall reign with Christ for ever, and for evermore, *Amen.*

A Few Words in the Fear and Dread of the Living God unto the Children of Believing Parents, and those that are Friends by Education, but not by Conversion; my Soul greatly desires, truly longs for and breaths to the Lord for your taking up the daily Cross to your own Wills and evil Inclinations, that so you may come to know the Cross of Christ, to crucifie you to all the Evil Inclinations, Thoughts and Imaginations of your own evil Hearts, which prompts you on to do those things that are not agreeable to the Holy Will of God: Dear Hearts, let me intreat and beg of you, for your Souls sake, and for the sake of him who died for you, even Christ Jesus, that Spotless Lamb of God, who takes away the Sins of the World, that now you would take the Yoke, or bear the Yoke of the Lord Jesus in your Youth, and love his Heavenly Cross, which is the Power of God unto Salvation unto every one that believeth in him: This Cross is that which will, as you mind it, crucifie all your Inclinations to Vanity and vain Pleasures, and engage you to abstain from all hurtful Company, and from every Appearance of Evil; beware of those vain Desires that goe out to Pleasures and Vanities that are in the World, either in Words, Actions, or in Meats, Drinks or Aparent, out of the Fear of the Lord, and let your Words be few and savoury, and in your Conversations in all Places, and among all Company, let the fear of God be before your Eyes, that so you may be in Solidity and Gravity in the Heavenly Awe of the all-seeing and Heart-searching God; that so you may be always feeling after the Enjoyments of Heavenly and Divine Pleasures, Joys and Consolations; read the Scriptures of Truth as often as you can, and read them in Seriousness, that the Lord may open your Understandings to know the Meaning or the Mind of the Lord in them, by waiting in Stillness upon him, having your Minds turned to that Heavenly Wisdom that will open them to you; so will your Youth preach forth the Honour of him who hath called you to believe in his Name, and ye will be Blessed of the Lord, and be a Joy and Comfort to your tender Parents; otherwise, if you grow up in that which is Evil, which leads you into the Vanities and Pleasures

of this wicked World, doing your own Wills and following the Inclinations of your own evil Hearts; then the Lord will cut many of you off from the Land of the Living; for it's those that are willing and obedient to the Lord that come to eat the Good of the Land; but those that refuse and rebel against his good Spirit in them, and the Advice and Counsel given unto them by their believing Parents, and Masters, and Ministers of Christ; it may be just with the Lord to cut them off with the Sword of his Justice: However, the Lord can raise Seed unto *Abraham* even of the Stones; hear, fear and tremble before the most high God, who hath beheld you with an Eye of Jealousie, bow before him, and let not any of the Enjoyments of this World puff up your Minds, either in Pride, Stubornness, or in the Vanity of this wicked World in a loose Conversation; the Lord incline your Hearts, and put his pure Fear in your Inward Parts, that ye may see beyond all those visible fading Enjoyments, and that your Minds may be lifted up with fervent Desires, and pure love and Delight after those things that are Heavenly, and concern your Souls everlasting well-being; then will you come to know your Affections to be set on things that are above, where Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God; then will your Treasure and Pleasure be in Heavenly Enjoyments that will never fade away. And all you that are Tender-hearted, and do truly desire the sincere Milk of the Word of Life, keep you near to the Breast of Consolation, and suck daily thereat, letting nothing come between it and you, so will your Growth be daily in the Truth from one Degree of Strength and Stature to another, in the Light, beholding the Snares and Temptations of the Enemy; and as you do abide in an Inward Diligence, out of the foolish Virgin's State, where through Spiritual Idleness comes Spiritual Slumber to that degree, as to the losing the Oil, for want of which the Lamp goes out: But abiding in a daily Subjection to the Heavenly Cross in the Holy Watchfulness, ye grow up to the Young Man's State, where you become Strong, and the Word of God abideth in you; and as you abide in it, you overcome the Wicked One, and come to see his Snares in all his Appearances; so that you can say, in vain is the Net spread in the Sight of any Bird, whose Eyes of their Understandings are opened by the Light of the Lord, and still keep in this Holy Light and Blessed Sight, the Encrease of Riches, Treasures and Pleasure in this Life will be your Portion Spiritually, and in the Life to come the full Enjoyment thereof; so as there is an
abiding

abiding faithful in the young Man's State, here will be a growing up into the State of Fathers, Eating of the Fruit of the Land of the Living, even of the Tree of Life in the Paradise of God; for then you will know him who was from the Beginning, and in whose Power, and Strength, and Wisdom, Preservation will be daily witnessed out of all those things that proceed from the Adversary of the Souls of all People: So then here will be a walking in Wisdom's Holy Heavenly Path of Humility, where *Shiloe's* Brook runs, and flows very sweetly, to the Comforting of the Immortal Soul; and here this Holy Water washeth the inside Clean, and by the Holy Blood and Life of the Lamb sprinkled inwardly, and with his Holy Oil anointed, and so comes into within the Vale, into the Holy of Holy's, where the Glory of the Antient of Days is beheld in the Mercy-Seat of infinite Loving-kindness, and in the Enjoyment of his Sweet Smiles and Divine Favours, being overcome with his glorious and pure Presence, their Souls do offer up in the Strength of his pure Love, all Honour, Glory, Praise and Dominion to the Lord God, and the Lamb which ascends his Throne, who is over all Heaven and Earth, God blessed for Ever, and Ever, *Amen, Amen.*

Warwick, the 20th of
the 12th Month,
1705.

From your Friend and Brother
in the Labour and
Travel of the Gospel,

JOHN HANDS.

F I N I S.

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 all Heaven and Earth, God blessed for Ever, and Ever, Amen.

Written, the 10th of
 the 12th Month,
 1795.

I am your Friend,
 John Hand.

JOHN HAND.

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